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ABSTRACT

The Milwaukee Public Schools present executive summaries of 1981-82 evaluations for six programs including: (1) Project RISE designed to improve the quality of education in 18 of the lowest achieving schools in the district; (2) the Title I program focused at the elementary level with concentration on the improvement of readiness, reading, and mathematics skills; (3) the Title VI Magnet Schools with funds provided to assist in the voluntary desegregation of the Milwaukee Public Schools through a variety of magnet specialty programs; (4) the Follow-the-Child Program designed to help former Title I students (first through sixth grades) who transferred to non-Title I schools because of desegregation; (5) Basic Grant projects designed to support the desegregation program of the school district; and (6) the North Division School Effectiveness Program intended to exert a substantial impact on all aspects of the school learning climate for grade levels 9 to 11. (PN)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARIES

OF 1981-82 PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

RISE

TITLE I

TITLE VI MAGNET SCHOOLS

TITLE VI FOLLOW-THE-CHILD

TITLE VI BASIC GRANT

NORTH DIVISION SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

TM 830 435

Compiled by Gary D. Peterson

DIVISION OF PLANNING AND LONG-RANGE DEVELOPMENT
Department of Educational Research and Program Assessment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: PROJECT RISE
EVALUATION REPORT

Project RISE is designed to improve the quality of education in 18 of the lowest achieving schools in the district. The goal is to raise the achievement levels in these generally segregated schools to a level comparable to that of the city-wide average in the basic skills. Applying school effectiveness methodologies such as emphasis on basic skills, direct instruction, school climate, and leadership, these 18 schools completed their second full year of operation in the RISE format during the 1981-82 school year.

The instructional processes in RISE schools were monitored during the 1981-82 school year to determine the extent to which the program was operated according to design. The results of this monitoring show that RISE schools clearly applied more emphasis than non-RISE schools on basic skill instruction. This finding was expected according to school effectiveness theory. In contrast to this, in the less tangible area of school atmosphere, important differences were not noted between RISE and non-RISE schools. While not a positive finding, it is not surprising, due to the inherent difficulties in addressing school concerns with pride, respect, discipline, and climate. With regard to the leadership factor and high expectations, no clear pattern was found when comparisons were made between RISE and non-RISE schools. Approximately one-half of the RISE schools in comparison to non-RISE schools were seen as placing more emphasis on leadership and one-half were seen as placing equal emphasis.

This, again, is not unexpected due to the fact that the notions of high expectations and leadership are well-known and hopefully practiced in all of our schools.

MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT

After two full years of implementation, eight of 18 RISE schools equaled or surpassed city-wide achievement averages at the third grade level and six of the 18 matched or exceeded the system standard at grade five. Equally important is the finding that the number of extremely low scoring schools had been dramatically reduced over the last two years. For example, at the third grade level, 14 of the 18 RISE schools, during the 1978-79 school year, had more than ten percent of their students in the low performance category than the city-wide average. At the conclusion of the 1981-82 school year, this number, 14, had been reduced to three. Combining these statistics shows that eight schools already have reached city-wide levels at grade three, seven are close, within ten percentage points of the city-wide standard, and only three have a distance to go.

READING ACHIEVEMENT

At the third grade level, four of the 18 RISE schools (an increase of one over the 1978-79 condition) had reached or surpassed the city-wide standard by the close of the 1981-82 school year. At grade five, however, the number reaching the standard was only one. As was the case with mathematics, the number of schools with severe reading deficiencies was dramatically reduced during the two years of RISE programming. At the third grade level, nine of 18 (a reduction of five) RISE schools

shows ten percent or more in the low category than the city-wide average. At grade five, 14 of the 18 schools continued to show discrepancies of ten percent or more students in the low performance category than the city-wide average.

OTHER FINDINGS

These generally promising results were reinforced by a survey measuring RISE schools against 30 ideal instructional conditions. On the average, RISE schools rated between "usually characteristic" and "definitely characteristic" with regard to 26 of these 30 positive educational conditions. The four areas of relative weakness related to parental support and instruction in language arts, writing, and the non-basic skill areas.

CONCLUSION

The basic skills emphasis among Project RISE schools is paying dividends in increased achievement levels and reduced numbers of low scoring schools. The criterion of reaching city-wide achievement levels on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) during a three year period appears unlikely, however.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: TITLE I, ESEA
EVALUATION REPORT

Milwaukee's public schools have had programs funded under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since the authorizing legislation was adopted by Congress in the mid-1960's. The main focus of the program in Milwaukee in recent years has been at the elementary level with concentration on the improvement of readiness, reading, and mathematics skills. This has been accomplished by supplementary instruction for educationally disadvantaged pupils. The 1981-82 project served approximately 11,000 pupils in 62 public schools with 275 professional staff with an approximate budget of $9,700,000.

The evaluation findings showed that there were positive gains in student achievements between fall, 1981 and spring, 1982 at most grade levels in each of the projects. For example, gains were found at all grade levels (first to eighth grades) in the reading and mathematics projects. These two projects combined represented about two-thirds of the total budget.

The typical student in Title I reading was reading in fall at a level which was lower than 85-90 percent of a national sample of students. At the end of the year, the typical Title I student had learned more than expected such that he/she then was at a reading level which was lower than 80-85 percent of a national sample. In the mathematics project, a typical Title I student started at the 20th percentile rank and moved to the 25th percentile.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: MAGNET SCHOOL PROGRAM
EVALUATION REPORT
ESAA, TITLE VI

From 1978 through 1982, ESAA Title VI provided funds to assist in the voluntary desegregation of the Milwaukee Public Schools through a variety of magnet specialty programs. In 1981-1982, almost four million federal dollars enabled 29 unique curricula or teaching methods to attract over 10,000 students to 26 schools. This effort promoted the successful desegregation of all funded magnet schools.

The federal funding supplemented local budgets for specialty school facilities and operation by providing money for teachers and paraprofessional aides, supplies and equipment, and field trips. Administrators and school staffs used the monies to create innovative curricula suitable for a variety of student interests.

Magnet program students were expected to respond with improved academic achievement, increased multi-cultural understanding, better attendance, and a lower rate of suspensions at the high school level. The evaluation of progress toward attaining those objectives resulted in the following major findings for the 1981-1982 school year:

- On tests of reading and mathematics, magnet program third graders exceeded city-wide performance levels and had a greater percent of high-scoring pupils than city-wide schools and the national sample. Seventh-grade magnet program students scored at the same level as city-wide middle schools, both groups having a lower percent of high scoring students than the national sample.

Additional data from other projects showed that the Title I project had a positive impact on the students it was intended to help. For example, the average score of children in the kindergarten-lower primary project was increased from a percentile rank of 20 to 37 in language and from 20 to 30 in mathematics. Parents also indicated Title I activities made a difference in their child's school work. Related to this, many parents were involved in advisory council activities, as volunteers in the Title I classrooms and as participants in project planning, implementation, and evaluation.

·Magnet program elementary pupils did not attain the expected increase in multi-cultural understanding and appreciation. The increase was the same as that of pupils in traditional programs.

·Thirty-three percent of magnet parents responded to a survey mailed to a random sample of 2,760. Of those who replied, 91 percent reported that their child seems happy in school, 85 percent indicated they are satisfied with the educational programs, and 75 percent felt that magnet programs provide a better education. These percents were higher than those of the 1981 survey. Other findings included: 1) 5,870 parents felt that integration has improved racial/ethnic relationships, 2) 67 percent of the parents felt that the magnet program increased ethnic understanding, 3) 74 percent of magnet parents visited the classroom, and 4) 44 percent attended parent meetings.

·Pupils in the elementary environmental educational magnet demonstrated mastery of environmental concepts on tests of course content at five grade levels from kindergarten through grade 6.

·Multi-language magnet third graders in total immersion German or French programs continued to score higher than their city-wide peers in English reading and all language arts except spelling. This continuing result provides added evidence that acquisition of a second language improves most English skills.

·Pupils in the health education, science, and physical education magnet demonstrated significant pre/post improvement in health and science knowledge.

·In response to a survey, 71 percent of 1,414 magnet high school career specialty students expressed satisfaction with their school program, 18 percent were undecided, and six percent dissatisfied. Eighty-four percent planned to re-enroll in their specialty. Of the remaining 16 percent, over 75 percent were graduating seniors, and 15 percent found that they were not interested in the specialty.

- Mastery tests were developed by staff members for one or more courses in each high school career specialty. The criterion for mastery (75 percent mastery by 90 percent of the students) was achieved in 13 of the 29 courses tested.

- Magnet high school students had 31 percent fewer period absences and 41 percent fewer suspensions than non-magnet students.

- A follow-up survey of 1980 and 1981 high school career specialty graduates revealed that 59 percent were continuing their education in colleges or technical schools. Of these, 76 percent were enrolled in a program related to their high school specialty. Sixty-five percent were employed full or part-time. In addition, they reported that the programs gave them skills, knowledge, and self-confidence which afforded a competitive advantage in the post-high school worlds of work and continuing education.

After five years, most of the specialty programs have become models of education made vibrant through the pursuit of students' interests and skills.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: TITLE VI, ESAA, SPECIAL COMPENSATORY
FOLLOW-THE-CHILD PROGRAM
EVALUATION REPORT

DESCRIPTION

The Title VI, ESAA, Follow-the-Child (FTC) Program has been in operation in desegregated schools of the Milwaukee School District since January, 1979. This program was designed to help former Title I students (1st grade through 6th grade) who transferred to non-Title I schools because of desegregation. The following criteria were established to determine students' eligibility to the FTC program: 1) students must have received Title I supplementary academic services prior to their transfer to non-Title I schools; and 2) students must score at or below the 39th percentile in reading, mathematics, or both to be eligible for these services.

On the basis of the above criteria, 457 students were enrolled in the program during the 1981-82 school year. Eighty-eight (19 percent) received reading/language arts only, 46 (ten percent) mathematics only, and 323 (71 percent) both reading/language arts and mathematics.

The program had three components: reading, mathematics, and itinerant. In the reading and mathematics components, teachers were assigned to two schools (on one-half time basis) and served 25 to 30 students in each school; itinerant teachers were assigned to two or three schools and served 16-20 students at each school, both in language arts and mathematics. A total of 22 desegregated schools received services during the 1981-82 school year.

The administrative and teaching staff for the 1981-82 school year included: a coordinator/evaluator, two supervising teachers (for reading and mathematics), and 19 teachers.

RESULTS

To assess project students' academic progress, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) was administered to project students in October, 1981 and May, 1982. Evaluation findings in the reading project indicated that first, fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students showed substantial gains ranging from 2.3 to 14.8 NCE points on their pre/post-test results. Second graders, however, failed to show much progress in reading achievement. Evaluation results in the regular mathematics project indicated that pupils at all grade levels showed positive gains, ranging from 2.7 to 11.9 NCE points.

In the itinerant project, positive gains between pre/post-testing were found only at grade levels three and five for language arts. With respect to mathematics, students in second, third, fourth, and fifth grades showed substantial positive gains on their pre/post-test scores. Sixth grade student achievement remained unchanged.

Finally, data were gathered from project principals, FTC teachers, and program students to complete the assessment of program effectiveness. Overall results indicated that the respondents were positive towards the program, and felt it had successfully helped children with academic problems adjust to desegregated schools.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: TITLE VI, ESAA BASIC GRANT
EVALUATION REPORT

ESAA Title VI Basic Grant projects have been in operation in the Milwaukee Public Schools since the 1977-78 school year. Basic grant projects were designed to support the desegregation program of the school district. 1981-82 components included human relations, staff development, and dissemination.

The purpose of this summary is to complete the cycle of identifying needs, establishing objectives, implementing activities, and measuring achievement. The full report contains a complete overview followed by a description of project monitoring activities, on-site evaluations, outcomes, and a discussion of findings.

Major findings of the 1981-82 evaluation are summarized below.

HUMAN RELATIONS

There was a 74 percent positive response from parents participating in the human relations activities; an 84 percent positive response to the activities held for staff; and an 85 percent positive response from students to surveys given at the end of major human relations activities.

The results of surveys completed by the parents of students attending 48 elementary schools showed that 23 percent of the parents felt that their

child's attitude toward school integration has become more positive since their children have been attending an integrated school. Similarly, 19 percent of the parents also reported more positive attitudes toward integration during this period of time.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The overall level of multicultural awareness for students who visited the Multicultural Learning Center showed a 15 percent increase over the 1980-81 level.

Eighty-nine percent of the staff who attended a workshop at the Staff Development Center felt that the ideas for multicultural awareness and individualized instruction had been useful or very useful in providing for the wide-range of abilities of students in their desegregated classroom.

DISSEMINATION

Ninety percent of the parents surveyed had received some information relative to the different programs and activities offered to help increase voluntary desegregation in the Milwaukee Public Schools.

CONCLUSIONS

The overall results cited above for the staff development and dissemination components are substantially higher than the expectations stated in the proposal. The human relations component results are consistent with proposed expectations with the exception of parent activity results which are slightly lower than the proposed expectations.

Considering these findings, it can be concluded that the staff development, human relations, and dissemination components made substantial contributions to the success of the Milwaukee program of school desegregation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: NORTH DIVISION SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS PROGRAM EVALUATION REPORT

The North Divison School Effectiveness Program, focusing on grade levels 9-11 during the 1981-82 school year, is intended to exert a substantial impact on all aspects of the school learning climate. The program is based on the premises that:

-- High standards of academic and personal excellence are possible.

-- Every student is capable of learning under proper conditions.

-- High expectations are essential for each and every student.

-- Academic activities must assume the highest priority at North Division.

All of the measures taken as part of this evaluation show that the North Division High School Effectiveness Program made significant progress in pursuit of its goals during the 1981-82 school year.

(1) Gains in standardized test results between fall and spring were found for three of three measures in reading and one of two measures in mathematics.

(2) North Division grade point averages generally increased during the 1981-1982 school year over the levels found in 1980-1981. Black student achievement consistently exceeded the system average for black students for both semesters and at each of three grade levels.

(3) Student attendance increased from the 1980-1981 level of 83.9 percent to 84.1 percent during the 1981-1982 school year. Black student attendance at North Division was higher than the city average

for black students. The difference favoring North Division was 82 percent to 77 percent for the first semester and 80 percent to 74 percent for semester two.

(4) Suspensions increased from the 1980-81 school year to the 1981-1982 school year. Issuing suspensions at a rate of 95.5 per 100 students, North Division clearly exceeded the system-wide average of 70.3 per 100 students. However, in terms of the percent of black students suspended, North Division ranked 6th lowest among the 15 high schools.

(5) The drop-out rate at North Division for black students, 7.1 per 100 students, was 6th lowest among the 15 high schools.

(6) Reported incidents of vandalism during 1981-1982 at North Division decreased by about one-half from the 1980-1981 school year. Compared to the other high schools, North Division had the fewest reported incidents of vandalism and the lowest cost of vandalism during the 1981-1982 school year.

The successes of the North Division School Effectiveness Program over the last two school years clearly shows that the program is making progress towards meeting the needs of its students. Refinements to the program as needed should assure continued success as it is extended into grade twelve.